MAN-STEALING AND SLAVERY

DENOUNCED BY THE

PRESBYTERIAN

AND

METHODIST CHURCHES.

TOGETHER WITH AN

ADDRESS TO ALL THE CHURCHES.

BY REV. GEORGE BOURNE.

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1834.

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'At a meeting of Delegates to form a National Anti-Slavery Society, convened at Philadelphia, 4th December, 1833:

'*Resolved*, That George Bourne, William Lloyd Garrison and Charles W. Denison be a committee to prepare a synopsis of Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery; and of the anti-slavery items in a note formerly existing in the Catechism of the Presbyterian church of the United States; and of such other similar testimony as they can obtain, to be addressed to Methodists, Presbyterians, and all professed Christians in this country, and published under the sanction of this convention.'

In conformity with this appointment, the committee have selected from the records of the Presbyterian church every article of general interest which adverts to this momentous subject. They have also combined with those discussions, all that is universally admitted as obligatory in the Methodist discipline, with every thing material in the tract of John Wesley respecting slavery.

The general ignorance not only of the citizens at large, but also of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, and their immediate adherents, of these authentic documents, renders their republication indispensable. The persons who are actually enumerated as in the communion of those two churches, with other attendants on their worship, who are directly influenced by them, probably comprise one million of the adult population of these States. The vast moral power which is thus wielded over our republic, combined with the inconceivable responsibility of those who manage machinery productive of such unspeakably influential results, demands that it should be exercised legitimately, and for the holy purposes of human improvement according to the authoritative prescriptions of the Christian religion.

In reference to slavery *in the abstract*, both those churches agree. They join in unequivocally condemning the whole system as most corrupt in origin, of the vilest characters and as accompanied with the most direful effects upon its victims, and with everlasting punishment to the impenitent workers of that iniquity. Now, only let us suppose that an overwhelming majority of this million of adults would simultaneously declare, that within their moral and religious communion and influence, man-stealing should instantly terminate; and that every man among them who would not immediately cease, as John Wesley characterizes them to be a '*lion, a tiger, a bear, and a wolf*,' should be excluded from their churches; and that henceforth no slave-driver should be acknowledged as a Christian—slavery in the United States would be smitten in the fifth rib, so that it would require not the second stroke; but would speedily expire, amid the hallelujahs of Christians, who would witness and hail the last struggles of the infamous and odious dying monster.

The ensuing extracts therefore, from the authentic standards of the Presbyterian and Methodist Episcopal churches, are earnestly recommended to the deliberate examination of all persons who are anxious to remove the evil of slavery from our republic; and especially to the serious and prayerful scrutiny of all Christians of every denomination. They afford abundantly instructive matter for careful reflection. They teach us that Christian professors will solemnly and repeatedly avow in the most public forms, their belief and adherence to Christian truth; and at the same time, that they will wilfully and constantly violate all its sublime commandments. They exhibit ecclesiastical bodies in a very mournful aspect, as asserting undeniable verities; and then obliterating their own creed; as proclaiming the mandates of divine revelation to be obligatory, and yet themselves practically nullifying them; and instead of manfully upholding Christian truth, as shifting, shuffling, time-serving, and turning about, just as the demands of worldly wisdom and covetousness, the clamors of carnal policy and sensual indulgence, and the schemes of diabolical expediency, urge them to deny equity and justice; and to extenuate or sanction every diversified crime which flows from man-stealing.

No documents upon slavery of equal importance, it is believed, can be exhibited to the American churches and citizens. These are not the ebullitions of modern controversy drawn forth by the recent excitements. They are the grave, cold, and almost unfeeling declarations of men, who were gov-

erned in their expressions even by the criminals whose actions are condemned, and against whom their regulations only could be enforced. Yet no modern anti-slavery partizans, not even the Convention who formed the American Anti-Slavery Society, have exceeded the Presbyterian General Assembly in hideousness of display, and the Methodist Conferences in unequivocal condemnation. The most powerful passages in the declaration of the American Anti-Slavery Society equal not John Wesley, the oracle of Methodism, in pungency of censure and reproachful epithets. It is therefore essential to recur to fundamental principles; and to make known to all classes of citizens, the sterling doctrines, the indignant denunciations, and the authoritative injunctions of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches upon this grave topic; with the genuine spirit and effects of man-stealing, and the true character and doings of all slave-holders.

New-York, January 11, 1834.

PRESBYTERIANISM AND SLAVERY.

Opinion of the Synod of New-York and Philadelphia in regard to Slavery, and its abolition, in 1787.

'The Synod, taking into consideration the overture concerning Slavery, came to the following judgment:

'The Synod of New-York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the states have taken in promoting the abolition of slavery. They earnestly recommend it to all the members belonging to their communion, to give those persons who are at present held in servitude such good education as to prepare them for the better enjoyment of freedom. And they moreover recommend that masters, wherever they find servants disposed to make a just improvement of the privilege, would give them a peculium, or grant them sufficient time, and sufficient means of procuring their own liberty at a moderate rate; that thereby they may be brought into society with those habits of industry that may render them useful citizens. And finally, they recommend it to all their people to use the most prudent measures, consistent with the interests and the state of civil society in the countries where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America.

This 'judgment' was also republished as the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in 1793.

The second annunciation of the sentiments of the Presbyterian church upon the subject of slavery, was made in the year 1794, when the 'Scripture proofs,' notes, &c., were adopted by the General Assembly. Their doctrine at that period is stated in the *note* b, *appended to the one hundred and forty-second Question of the larger Catechism, in these words:*

'1 Tim. i. 10. The law is made for man-stealers. This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it to capital punishment, Exodus xxi. 16; and the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank. The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in retaining them in it. Hominum fures, qui servos vel liberos abducunt, retinent, vendunt, vel emunt. Stealers of men are all those who bring off slaves or freemen, and keep, sell, or buy them. To steal a freeman, says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances, we only steal human property, but when we steal or retain men in slavery, we seize those who, in common with ourselves, are constituted by the original grant, lords of the earth. Genesis i. 28. Vide Poli synopsin in loc.'

The subject was also introduced into the General Assembly, in 1795, but without any effect and without producing any impression. From that period, twenty years elapsed before man-stealing was again noticed in that ecclesiastical body. The following extract is found in the Digest, page 339; and it partially illustrates the views of those who constituted the majority of the Assembly at that period.

Advice given by the Assembly, in relation to Slavery, in 1815.

'The committee to which was committed the report of the committee to which the petition of some elders, who entertain conscientious scruples on the subject of holding slaves, together with that of the Synod of Ohio, concerning the buying and selling of slaves had been referred, reported; and their report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows:—

'The General Assembly have repeatedly declared their cordial approbation of those principles of civil liberty which appear to be recognised by the Federal and State governments, in these United States. They have expressed their regret that the slavery of the Africans and their descendants still continues in so many places, and even among those within the pale of the church; and have urged the Presbyterians under their care, to adopt such measures as will secure at least to the rising generation of slaves, within the bounds of the church, a religious education; that they may be prepared for the exercise and enjoyment of liberty, when

God, in his providence, may open a door for their emancipation. The committee refer said petitioners to the printed extracts of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, for the year 1787, on this subject, republished by the Assembly in 1793; and also to the extracts of the minutes of the Assembly for 1795; which last are in the following words :—

'' A serious and conscientious person, a member of a Presbyterian congregation, who views the slavery of the negroes as a moral evil, highly offensive to God, and injurious to the interests of the gospel, lives under the ministry of a person, or among a society of people, who concur with him in sentiment on the subject upon general principles; yet, for particular reasons, hold slaves, and tolerate the practice in others,—Ought the former of these persons, under the impressions and circumstances above described, to hold Christian communion with the latter?'

'Whereupon, after due deliberation, it was

'*Resolved*, That as the same difference of opinion with respect to slavery takes place in sundry other parts of the Presbyterian church, notwithstanding which, they live in charity and peace, according to the doctrine and practice of the apostles; it is hereby recommended to all conscientious persons, and especially to those whom it immediately respects, to do the same. At the same time the General Assembly assure all the churches under their care, that they view with the deepest concern any vestiges of slavery which may exist in our country, and refer the churches to the records of the General Assembly, published at different times; but especially to an overture of the late Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, published in 1787, and republished among the extracts from the minutes of the General Assembly of 1793, on that head, with which they trust every conscientious person will be fully satisfied.

'This is deemed a sufficient answer to the first petition; and with regard to the second, the Assembly observe, that although in some sections of our country, under certain circumstances, the transfer of slaves may be unavoidable, yet they consider the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and all undue severity in the management of them, as inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. And they recommend it to the Presbyteries and Sessions under their care, to make use of all prudent measures to prevent such shameful and unrighteous conduct.'

It is worthy of remembrance, that during the debate upon the petitions referred to in the above unintelligible advice, the note subjoined to Question 142 of the larger Catechism was first publicly introduced upon the slavery question, in the General Assembly.

The reading of it astonished all parties. The friends of equal rights and of Christian truth were surprised that they had over-looked or forgotten so authoritative a testimony; and the preaching slavites were exasperated with indignation, and immediately began to conspire together for the erasure of that note, and of the doctrine which it proclaims, from the standards of the Presbyterian church.

The answer of the Synod to Ohio and the petitioning elders satisfied no persons; especially as it did not encourage church officers to fulfil their evangelically prescribed duty. It was opposed upon these principles: —Conscientious men cannot hold communion with those who are always practising that evil which is 'highly offensive to God and injurious to the interests of the gospel.' 'It was maintained that all the records of the General Assembly had been totally unavailing; that preachers, elders, and church members bought, sold, worked, starved and flayed their slaves as much, and even more grossly than their infidel and irreligious neighbors: and that to talk of living in Christian 'charity and peace' with men who always exhibited a direct inconsistency with the spirit of the gospel, and who were ever guilty of 'shameful and unrighteous conduct,' is voluntary delusion, and openly criminal. It was also avowed, that by the Confession of Faith, and the prior decisions of the General Assembly, every slaveholder who pretended to be a Christian, was a *staunch hypocrite*, who ought *de facto* to be excluded from the church: and a protest to this effect against the preceding deceptive and two-faced declaration, was presented to the Assembly; every argument in which protest, the history of the subsequent nineteen years has verified beyond dispute.

One result of the above discussion was an exhibition of as extraordinary a specimen of ecclesiastical chicanery as probably can be found in the annals of the Protestant churches; thereby proving the truth of Article III. Chapter 31, of their own Confession of Faith: 'All Synods or Councils may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice.' Whether the decisions of the General Assembly of 1816 ought to be a rule of faith or practice, can be easily determined by a consideration of these two facts, in reference to slavery.

The following question was propounded for the decision of that Assembly. '*Ought Baptism, on the profession and promise of the master, to be administered to the children of slaves?*' A more complete burlesque upon sound theological doctrine, and a more base desecration of a Christian ordinance can scarcely be conceived. What did the

General Assembly answer to this absurd inquiry?

'It is the duty of masters who are members of the church to present the children of parents in servitude to the ordinance of Baptism. It is the duty of Christ's ministers to baptize all children of this description, when presented to them by their masters.'

In other words, it is the duty of preaching slave-drivers to baptize the stolen children of American citizens upon the Christian profession of the criminal, who has kidnapped both the parents and their offspring!

The second fact is still more outrageous. It is found in the 'Digest of the General Assembly,' page 126, thus entitled:—

'*Resolutions in regard to the Scripture proofs and notes by the Assembly, in* 1816.'

'The Presbytery of Philadelphia proposed an inquiry to the Assembly "relative to the notes found in the book containing the Constitution of the Presbyterian church." To this demand the Assembly replied. The minute is extended to a considerable length, and contains a variety of other matter totally irrevelant to our present discussion. Those parts only are quoted which unfold their "mystery of iniquity." Speaking of the notes they thus announce:

'These notes are no part of the constitution. The notes which now appear in the book were approved by the General Assembly, and directed to be printed with the proofs in the form in which they now appear. These notes are explanatory of some of the principles of the Presbyterian church. The notes are of the same force while they continue with the other acts of that judicature, but subject to alterations, amendments, or a total erasure, as they shall judge proper."

Disregarding the flat contradictions in these sentences, it is only necessary to recollect, that the notes are scarcely any thing else than texts of Scripture, with a very few concise explanations; and yet according to that Assembly of 1816, they were authorized to alter, amend, or erase those notes, that is, 'the oracles of God,' as they judged proper. This was their anti-christian assumption; now watch their act.

No Christian will have the hardihood to contest the scriptural accuracy of the note to Question 142 of the larger Catechism. In truth, it is nothing more than a few sentences, to show that the Lord's gift to man, at creation, is utterly abrogated by that crime which the law of Moses punished with death; and which the apostle Paul enumerated with the most atrocious wickedness. Had that Assembly *nullified* fifty or one hundred other notes, whatever might have been thought of their piety, at least they would have been consistent. This was not their design, all their object was to erase that part of the word of God which denounces *men-stealers and man-stealing*. This was their decision, omitting a clause which has no connexion with the subject of slavery:

'*Resolved*, That as it belongs to the General Assembly to give directions in regard to the notes which accompany the constitution, this Assembly express it as their opinion, that in printing future editions of the Confession of this church;—the note connected with the Scripture proofs in answer to the question in the larger Catechism, "What is forbidden in the eight commandment?" in which the nature of the crime of men-stealing and slavery is dilated upon, *be omitted*. In regard to this omission, the Assembly think proper to declare, that in directing it, they are influenced by far other motives than any desire to favor slavery, or to retard the extinction of that mournful evil, as speedily as may consist with the happiness of all concerned.'

Upon this proceeding of the Assembly of 1816, it is only requisite to observe, that the Assembly 'thought proper to declare' that which is notoriously untrue. Every person who was present at the General Assembly of 1816, knows that the erasure of the above note was done avowedly to '*favor slavery, and to retard the extinction of that mournful evil*.' The resolution was adopted expressly to propitiate those confederated kidnappers, who are nominal Christians; and also to remove an insurmountable barrier to the condemnation of a minister, who, in his public discourses had exhibited the total contradiction between Christianity and man-stealing; and maintained that every professor of religion who is a slave-driver, is an open deceiver. This most important topic was also discussed in the General Assembly of 1817; and to prove the infallibility of Councils, they virtually decided in flat opposition to their predecessors of 1816, and also to their immediate successors of 1818.

It thus appears that the subject of American slavery engaged the attention of the General assembly in different forms during four years in succession, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818. Since which period the whole of the Presbyterian church have been sound asleep upon the 'highest kind of theft'—and while the 'sinners of the first rank' have multiplied and extended their man-stealing on every side, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies have been 'silent as death, and still as midnight!' except when to gratify the Christians! who wish to transport to *their own country!* the 'feeble, diseased, aged, or worn out slaves,' they have adopted some *two-tongued* minute respecting the Colonization Society.

Circumstances in 1818 imperiously required that the General Assembly of that year should contrive some mode to conceal their erasure of their own long announced

creed of faith, and their servile compliance with the clamorous demands of the unusual horde of men-stealers, who for special purposes of iniquity were gathered together on that occasion.

The following article, except a few immaterial omissions, was finally issued as their act. Having accomplished all their design, under ecclesiastical forms, and with the nominal sanction of the whole Presbyterian church, the slavites tacitly permitted the ensuing phillipic to be placed upon the records, and to be published to the world. They well knew that by the southern churches it would not even be noticed, much less practised. Many Presbyterian ministers and myriads of their members have never heard of the existence of such a document—while among the eastern and northern churches, they only intended by it to blind their eyes to the true character and wickedness of slavery, and to silence their outcry and disquietude respecting their being participants with their guilt, or connivers at their man-stealing. Their object has been attained. From that period, those sinners have pursued their man-thieving with additional alacrity, and to an indefinite extent; and the churches, until very recently, have scarcely noticed their increased and continually aggravating turpitude. Nevertheless, the General Assembly of 1818 thus unequivocally execrated slavery, and all its adherents. At the same time they most criminally then acknowledged, as they still do admit, these flagrant transgressors to their communion, and to fill every office in their churches. This act is found in the 'Digest of the General Assembly,' page 341. A few unimportant sentences only being omitted.

'A full expression of the Assembly's views of Slavery in 1818.

'The general Assembly of the Presbyterian church, having taken into consideration the subject of slavery, think proper to make known their sentiments upon it.

'We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves; and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoin that all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system—it exhibits rational, accountable, and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependent on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction; whether they shall know and worship the true God; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the gospel; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of slavery; *consequences not imaginary,* but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is *always* exposed, often take place in their *very worst degree and form;* and where all of them do not take place, still the slave is deprived of his natural rights, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest.

'From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which Christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion of their brethren of mankind, it is manifestly the duty of all Christians, when the inconsistency of slavery with the dictates of humanity and religion has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors, as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout the world. "We earnestly exhort them," the slaveholders, "to continue and to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery.—We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern, than regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.

'As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans by bringing them into slavery, our country ought to be governed in this matter by no other consideration than an *honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party,* uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience which such a regard may involve. We therefore warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians, against unduly extending this plea of necessity; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable to extinguish the evil.

'Having thus expressed our views on slavery, and of the duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for its complete extinction, we proceed to recommend, with all the earnestness and solemnity which this momentous subject demands, a particular attention to the following points.

'We recommend to all the members of our religious denomination, to facilitate and encourage the instruction of their slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian re-

ligion, by granting them liberty to attend on the preaching of the gospel; by favoring the instruction of them in Sabbath Schools, and by giving them all other proper advantages for acquiring the knowledge of their duty both to God and man. It is incumbent on all Christians to communicate religious instruction to those who are under their authority, and the doing of this in the case before us, so far from operating, as some have apprehended that it might, as an excitement to insubordination and insurrection, would operate as the most powerful means for the prevention of those evils.'

The Assembly here subjoin a note, which proves that the quietude of the island of Antigua, when the slaves of the neighboring West India islands had been in commotion, was owing to the religious instruction of the Moravian missionaries. To which may since be added, the examples of Demarara and Jamaica. This document of the Assembly is thus closed: 'We enjoin it on all church Sessions and Presbyteries to discountenance, and as far as possible to prevent all cruelty, of whatever kind, in the treatment of slaves; especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children; and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive those unhappy people of the blessings of the gospel, or who will transport them to places where the gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions. The manifest violation or disregard of this injunction, ought to be considered as just ground for the discipline and censures of the church. And if it shall ever happen that a Christian professor in our communion shall sell a slave who is also in communion with our church, contrary to his or her will and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the proper church judicature; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed without delay, by a suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent and make all the reparation in his power, to the injured party.'

This is the last formal act of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church upon the subject of slavery—and it contains the essence in smoother language, of all that the anti-slavery fanatics have ever promulged.

That ecclesiastical body proclaims, that slavery *grossly violates the most precious human rights; that it is utterly inconsistent with the law of God, of brotherly love, and reciprocal equity;* that it is *totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ;* that it *leaves the slaves without the power of moral action;* that *slaves are deprived of their natural rights, degraded as human beings, exposed to all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avariee may suggest;* that *without these frightful evils, slavery cannot exist;* and that these direful effects of man-stealing are experienced by the slaves in their *very worst degree and form.*

This appalling delineation of slavery was not made by 'reckless incendiaries, foul calumniators, blood-thirsty cut-throats, and rabid agitators,' as Presbyterian ministers and elders have characterized some of the most noble philanthropists in this republic; but this is the picture of slavery drawn by a body, of which the preaching slaveholders directed and controlled every movement and resolution. Such is their theory of slavery; what is the infernal system in practice, according to those slave-driving narrators?

The slaves *enjoy no instruction;* are *prohibited from all relative endearments; cannot preserve their personal purity and honor; realize all kinds of cruelty;* are *lawlessly separated from all their congenial and beloved companions*, the association with whom was the sole relief for their constant wretchedness; and are *trafficked without remorse, only to suffer additional anguish.* And to crown this whole mass of iniquity, we are oracularly assured, that *Christian professors sell as slaves Members of the Church, unto the most woful bondage!*

This is not a catalogue of slaveholders' crimes drawn out by 'visionary enthusiasts, wild fanatics, sly malignant hypocrites, and mischievous incendiaries,' as the defenders of the New-York mob, and their infidel minions described the only consistent friends of freedom, of the rights of man, and of Christianity; but these are the atrocities of slavery avowed by clerical slaveholders to extenuate human bondage, to cloak over their own ungodliness; and by this farce of recording a stigma upon slavery on their minutes, to terminate the uneasiness and denunciations of the Northern and Eastern Christians.

After sixteen years have revolved, what has been done? What Presbyterian professor has used his 'earnest and unwearied endeavors to efface this blot on our holy religion?' Where is that 'most virtuous part of the community' of slave-drivers who 'abhor slavery, and wish its extermination,' who have increased their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery? Where is the preaching or nominal Christian man-thief, who is not always 'extending the plea of necessity as a cover for the love and practice of slavery, and a pretence for not using efforts to extinguish the evil?' Where is the Presbyterian preacher, elder, or professor, who encourages 'the instruction of slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian religion,' as the Lord and his apostles taught the word of truth? There is scarcely such a

man between Washington and the Caribbean gulf, or the Atlantic and Mexico, south of the Potomac and the Ohio.

Where is there a Sabbath school for the colored citizens? Not an *oral* school, such as the slave-driving deceivers have contrived to conceal their turpitude, and blind the northern citizens; but a Sabbath school similar to those in almost every congregation in New-York or Massachusetts? In this respect ICHABOD is written upon that entire portion of the United States.

Where are the church Sessions or Presbyteries, who dare to call before them men whose every act is one unceasing round of all multiform cruelty to slaves? Do not professors now sell Christian slaves to Georgia or Louisiana in preference, because their superior excellence, and their religious principles procure a higher price even from the *citizen pedlar,* who in 'his trade of blood' roams from New-York to Milledgeville, buying slaves, when he cannot kidnap freemen, and transforming every district through which he passes, into a scene of mourning and wo, in its moral attributes and agonized sensibilities, the civil warfare only excepted, the exact counterpart of that African *Acceldema,* whence the colored people were originally stolen? Where is that church Session, or that Presbytery who will cite the most infuriated and malignant slave-driver to answer for his hellish cruelty or his piratical traffic? Where?

Since the unanimous adoption of the preceding 'full expression of the Assembly's views of slavery, in 1818'—the only case approximating to it, is that of John D. Paxton in Virginia; who several years ago fulfilled the Assembly's requirements; instructed his slaves and then emancipated them: for which philanthropy he was calumniated as vilely as if he had been a horse-thief, by all the men-stealing professors around him; and speedily coerced to abandon the congregation before whom he had acted such a noble example of Christian benevolence. Mark the contrast! John D. Paxton, for complying with the recommendation of the General Assembly, was driven from his pastoral charge amid universal hatred; and the Richmond slave-catching preacher, who hurried away three hundred miles distance to kidknap a colored girl, not only escaped with impunity, but he is justified and honored, because he is a brazen-faced, obdurate 'sinner of the first rank, and guilty of the highest kind of theft.'

From a secret of a portentous character, which has lately been disclosed, it is also manifest that there is no design on the part of those who contrive to govern all the ostensible proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church, and thereby of that whole denomination, to interfere with the question of slavery upon evangelical principles.

A person on behalf of a slaveholder, addressed the following letter to the editor of the Philadelphian—and as a supplement to the preceding documents, to show the utter discrepancy between good professions and evil practices, the article, a little abridged, is extracted from the Philadelphian of the 23d of January, 1834. Its contradictory tenets and mis-statements require no elucidation.

QUESTIONS ON SLAVERY.

'I have lately received a letter from a communicant of the Presbyterian church in South Carolina, who is the owner of a number of slaves which comprise the principal part of his estate, and of which he became possessed, partly by inheritance, and partly by marriage. He says the General Assembly have repeatedly declared that the holding of slaves is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. And although he feels anxious to regulate his course of life according to the Principles of Christianity, and the rules of the church to which he belongs, yet he cannot think that pure justice would require of him to set his slaves at liberty, and reduce his own family to beggary and ruin. Even though he were disposed so to act, the laws of his native state forbid his setting his slaves at liberty, unless they are sent out of its jurisdiction. Humanity would, in such a case, also require a temporary provision for them, after they were set at liberty.

The General Assembly have also declared, that where any member of the church holds slaves, it is his imperative duty to give them sufficient education to enable them to become good and peaceable citizens, and to have them instructed in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the laws of his own state, and those of Georgia, in which part of his estate lies, prohibit, under severe penalties, the instruction of slaves.

Here again, my friend 'is at fault.' His conscience and the rules of the church direct him to have him instructed. But if he do so he subjects himself to a prosecution under the laws of the state in which he lives.

He would fain know what he shall do. If he sets his slaves at liberty—he obeys the rules of the church, but violates the laws of his state, and reduces himself and family to beggary. If he obeys the laws of his state, and prohibits their instruction, he violates the rules, and subjects himself to the censure of the church and acts contrary to the dictates of his conscience.

An answer is solicited through 'The Philadelphian.'

HOWARD.

REPLY TO HOWARD.

Your friend and his family must turn day-laborers, earn their own bread by the sweat of their brow, become poor, beg, starve, or be crucified, rather than commit any one known sin. The certainty of impoverishing himself is no excuse for not freeing his slaves, if it is his duty to free them.

The General Assembly has ever acted in relation to this business; in resisting all the violent movements of absolute, immediate, universal and unconditional abolitionists.

To the last Assembly were sent an overture and a bundle of pamphlets for distribution, designed to show that every slaveholder ought to be excommunicated from the Presbyterian church: the overture was excluded from the house by the Committee of Bills, and the pamphlets were used as waste paper.

He who steals a man and makes him a slave is one of the worst of thieves and oppressors.

He who purchases a man thus enslaved is as great a criminal as the man-stealer.

Those who originated the system of slavery in our country, and those who perpetuate it, fall under the same condemnation.

It would be very just for the laws of the several states to subject *slave-traders* to punishment.

A man may inherit the relation of master to slaves, or he may become thus related to slaves inherited, or previously possessed by his wife.

In this case he should act the part of a friend, a patron, a father to these slaves; and should strictly compensate them for their labor according to their earnings, and his ability. If his slaves choose to be free from him, and can effect their freedom by removing from him, he should rather rejoice in it, than remove a finger to prevent them from obtaining their emancipation.

The laws of those states which forbid any man to emancipate or to instruct his slaves, are contrary to the laws of God, and the rights of man; and should be, in every constitutional way, resisted, and in every safe way evaded.

A person who has inherited the relation of master to slaves has no right to sell them to another without their consent. He should treat them as hired servants. The general law of benevolence requires all men to take all reasonable measures for banishing slavery from the world.

The political, civil, pecuniary, and religious interests of our country would all be promoted by converting every slave into a well instructed, industrious free laborer. As patriots and Christians, all American citizens ought to desire and promote the elevation, and final emancipation of all colored people.'

Two points are worthy of peculiar notice in this reply by the stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church. 1. He is as 'wild a *fanatic*,' and as 'rabid an agitator' as the abolitionist whom he condemns: for he declares that all those who originated, and who perpetuate slavery, are 'THE WORST OF THIEVES!' This includes all the doctrine and requirements of the 'absolute, immediate, universal and unconditional abolitionists.' We only assert, that *the worst of all theft* ought not to be tolerated one moment, and that '*the worst of all thieves*' ought instantly to be impeded from perpetrating their outrageous felonies. 2. The stated clerk also *officially* informs us, that an overture was sent to the General Assembly respecting slavery which was excluded from that body by the Committee of Bills. In other words, they determined not to fulfil their own enactments. By what right and authority a bundle of pamphlets sent for distribution among the members of the General Assembly, as every individual's own and exclusive possession, were withheld from them by the moderator and clerks, is utterly inconceivable. Those pamphlets belonged to the ministers and elders alone, for whose perusal they were kindly transmitted; and no men but the confederates of '*the worst of all thieves!*' would have dared thus to purloin the property of others; by clandestinely detaining pamphlets sent for the use of the members of the General Assembly from their rightful owners, and by using for waste paper the offering of Christian affection.

From this authentic survey of the Presbyterian doctrines upon slavery, when compared with their total abrogation of them in practice, every person must instantly discern the hypocritical inconsistency which has marked the course of that church during nearly fifty years; and the effrontery which all Presbyterian slaveholders display, who deceitfully profess to be Christians, not only in direct contradiction to the gospel of Jesus, but also in profound contempt and defiance of their own *pretended* and solemnly avowed creed of faith!

METHODISM AND SLAVERY.

THE volume entitled '*the Doctrine and Discipline of the* Methodist Episcopal Church' is always referred to as the standard book which contains 'the form of discipline, the articles of religion, and canons of' the Methodist Societies in the United States. In the ensuing review, we have compared two editions published by themselves, and regularly attested by their bishops: that of the year 1804, and of the year 1832. We mention this fact, because the disagreement between them probably is not known to one

Methodist out of a thousand, the preachers themselves included; and because it will prove that slavery contains '*the vilest iniquity, the worst of vices and wickedness, and a grand imposture; for it is one great lie, one grand cheat.*

Both editions contain this unequivocal statement. 'There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practised, such as—'*the buying and selling of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them.*'

From this doctrine it follows; that the Methodist Episcopal Church do formally avow, that no slaveholders ever did evangelically desire to 'flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.' Thus the Presbyterian Assemblies and the Methodist Conferences exactly agree *in the abstract.* The former declare, that all slaveholders are 'sinners of the first rank, and guilty of the highest kind of theft'—and the latter affirm, that from his sins he never had a desire to be saved. Now, no anti-slavery man ever uttered truth in stronger language than these ecclesiastical denouncers of the slaveholding confederacy.

The last article in both editions is entitled, OF SLAVERY; and the question is the same in both books.

'Question.—What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?

Answer 1.—We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our church hereafter; where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.'

This clause is from the edition of 1832; and is much more concisely expressed than in the edition of 1804; where they tell us for the *twelfth* time, as it is the *twelfth* edition of their Articles and Discipline, that they '*are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.*' But it may properly be asked, how much are they convinced? For the number of slaveholders has been continually multiplying in the Methodist churches from their first Conference, about fifty years ago, to the present day. They are convinced of the evil of slavery, declare every slaveholder an impenitent, unredeemed sinner; and nevertheless they sanction the evil which he commits, by acknowledging him to be a Christian. What mockery can transcend this insulting delusion?

The second clause is alike in both editions.

'Answer 2.—When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.' This regulation reads very well upon paper, but no man ever seriously believed that the requisition would be carried into execution. In the edition of 1804, the third clause thus reads:—

'Answer 3.—No slaveholder shall be received into full membership in our society, till the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery.'

Examine this point! If the preacher spoke to the slave-driver 'freely and faithfully,' he must talk in this edifying manner; '*Brother!* you are a great sinner: you have caught in your man-trap men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them. You are yet in your sins, from which you never desired to be saved, and you are going to the wrath to come, from which you have never desired to flee. We have no fault to allege against you, except that you are a man-stealer, a sinner of the first rank, and guilty of the highest kind of theft; the great evil of which we are convinced of as much as ever. Therefore we shall receive you as a good and acceptable member!' Had any remark been made at the admission of a candidate, it must have been in this exemplary and consistent style: but nothing was ever said upon the subject. The Methodist Conferences do not bar out those who wish to join their church, merely because they enslave colored citizens. That third clause, as it was a dead letter in practice, afterward was expunged, as useless and impracticable. *In the edition of* 1832 *it is not inserted.* This is wondrous ecclesiastical infallibility! which asserts truth for the *twelfth* time in 1804; and in 1832 obliterates it, because the preaching gospel doctrine is inexpedient, and costs too much! Thus, after their way, they serve God and mammon!

The third clause in the edition of 1832 is not inserted in that of 1804.

'Answer 3.—All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God; and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service.' Slave-drivers teach slaves to read the word of God; and to attend public worship! and preachers enforce these things prudently! Yes; they do it *very prudently;* that is, they are as earnest and clamorous for the melioration of the

wretched condition of the colored citizens, as the watchmen and shepherds who are described by the prophet, Isaiah lvi. 10, 11.

In the edition of 1832—the fourth and fifth clauses contain regulations concerning the colored preachers, which are of no importance in this summary. They are not found in the edition of 1804. But in the volume issued thirty years ago, the fourth and fifth clauses combine some important illustrations of slavery in its connection with the Christian church. Inefficient as they were in practice, yet they had a show of conscience remaining in the Methodist Conferences; but they have been erased. The rules could not be enforced: and the absurdity of adopting different principles of religious legislation, bounded by geographical lines, is so glaring, that as they would not execute the law of the Lord in reference to slavery, they thought it most advisable to remove every barrier, and admit the slave-drivers into their church, without either scruple or obstruction.

These are the two clauses which have been obliterated:

'Answer 4.—Every member of the society who sells a slave, except at the request of the slave, in cases of necessity and humanity, agreeably to the judgment of a committee of the male members of the society, shall immediately be expelled the society. And if any member purchase a slave, the ensuing quarterly Conference shall determine on the number of years which the slave shall serve to work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing, shall execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave, at the expiration of the term determined by the quarterly meeting Conference; and in default, such member shall be excluded the Society.' To these rules were added two items—that 'in the case of a female slave, all her children also should be free, the girls at 21, and the boys at 25; and that all terms of emancipation should be subject to the decision of the quarterly Conference.' The answer closed in these memorable words: 'Nevertheless, the *members of our societies in the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, shall be exempted from the operation of the above rules.*' According to this ecclesiastical oracle, what is heinous sin in Maryland is paradisaical innocence in Georgia; and an excommunicated man-stealer in the Shenandoah valley of Virginia, as soon as he can cross the Alleghany mountain to the South-west, becomes 'a good and acceptable member of the Methodist Episcopal church.' This last vestige, however, of decorum, for consistency's sake, after the example of their Presbyterian accomplices in the slave-trade, the Methodist preachers very properly blotted out of their discipline.

The following was the fifth clause in the edition of 1804, but by what process so exquisite a specimen of *carnal policy* was omitted, is unaccountable; unless the northern preachers in the General Conference resolved, that if that part which bore some resemblance of partial rectitude was effaced, the rule which carried the broad brand of knavery and anti-christianity upon its face should accompany it to the sepulchre of oblivion.

The Southern Methodists must have exulted, when they contrived to procure this exquisitely *edifying* specimen of evangelical instruction to be enacted as obligatory upon all their travelling preachers. It is a marvellous perversion of the ministerial office, and of gospel reciprocity!

'Answer 5.—Let our preachers from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters.' To the influence of this direction, may doubtless be imputed a large proportion of that ungodliness which debases and curses the whole mass of society where slavery developes its demoralizing power. The female slaves are exhorted to obey the commands of their masters!

These extracts are cited from their book of doctrines and discipline; and yet where can you find a parallel to such duplicity and abandonment of truth, rectitude and religion, as in these facts? unless among their counterparts in similar deceitfulness upon the subject of slavery, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian church.

This remarkable inconsistency and dereliction of principle and duty are aggravated by other collateral circumstances in the history of American Methodism. JOHN WESLEY, *of whom they boast as the Head and Founder, was a most decided anti-slavery man.* He opposed slaveholding in all its forms, degrees, and exhibitions. His testimony against it remains in all their books, and has been issued in the recent editions of his works, and formerly also as a tract; and yet through the artifices of the slave-drivers, the opinions of John Wesley are not more known or believed among the Methodists, than if he had never lifted up his voice like a trumpet. There is little doubt that had John Wesley's life been prolonged, slavery would have been altogether proscribed by the American Methodists: and even that auspicious fact for the church and the republic might have occurred, had not another obstruction been interposed.

Thomas Coke, who was John Wesley's successor in authority and influence, especially in America, was a most inveterate opponent of slavery—and in consequence, he received, especially on his last visit to the United States, such marked contempt and scornful insults from the slave-driving Meth-

odists, who he perceived were encouraged by that spirit of Diotrephes, which in all things will have the pre-eminence, that he tacitly resolved no more to interfere with American Methodism. He bade farewell to his intimate friends, with the full conviction that they should meet no more in America. Coke's opposition to man-stealing, with his caustic denunciations of the hypocritical slavites who pretended to be Christians, were strongly contrasted with the two-tongued compromisers who faced both ways, condemned slavery '*prudently*' at the North, and pleading expediency, approved of it in the South. Coke disappeared, and man-stealing was embodied with the Methodist church, where it has 'grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength,' until the official organs of their Conferences either conceal the horrors of slavery, or defend its corruption by perverting the Scriptures, or revile all those sincere Christian philanthropists who are striving for its abolition.

The ensuing extracts clearly unfold the glaring inconsistency of the Methodists; who, while they profess to bow down to John Wesley as their earthly oracle, on the most important topic in our civil and ecclesiastical polity, have ever acted in direct and flagrant contradiction to the irrefutable truths which he promulged. John Wesley always denounced the existing slavery in America as equally criminal with the maritime slave-trade, or the kidnapping and the transportation of Africans from Congo across the Atlantic for interminable bondage and misery.

John Wesley was also an eye-witness of slavery as it existed in Carolina and Georgia, at a very early period after the settlement of those colonies. Consequently, the decisions of the Founder of Methodism may be received as of great weight and importance in this exciting controversy, between the sons of God and the servants of mammon.

In the third volume of his works, page 341, Harper's edition, is the following pungent delineation. John Wesley had been reading a pamphlet against slavery and the slave-trade; and after expressing his opinion of the work, he thus proceeds:—'That execrable sum of all villanies, commonly called the slave-trade. I read of nothing like it in the heathen world, whether ancient or modern. It infinitely exceeds in every instance of barbarity, whatever Christian slaves suffer in Mohammedan countries.'

The same sentiments were promulged by John Wesley in reference to domestic slavery, as to the piratical traffic between Africa and America; but whenever the opinions and directions of that Methodist Leader are advanced on behalf of the abolition of that ungodliness among the slaveholders; the pretended respect for him is instantly diminished almost to a nonentity, and he is pronounced to have been but a man, fallible, and in this matter so ignorant of the true circumstances relative to American slavery, that his judgment is of no value, and therefore must be rejected.

Another of John Wesley's incidental illustrations of slavery is from his Journal for April, 1777. 'At Liverpool, many large ships are now laid up in the docks, which had been employed for many years in buying or stealing Africans, and selling them in America for slaves. The *men-butchers* have now nothing to do at this *laudable* occupation. Since the American war broke out, there is no demand for *human cattle*; so the men of Africa, as well as Europe, may enjoy their native liberty.' These cursory expressions fully unfold John Wesley's indignation against slavery and slaveholders. When the public mind began to be excited upon the atrocity of man-stealing, Wesley issued the following comprehensive tract, which greatly influenced the English Methodists at that period, and which has more recently contributed to effect the abolition of slavery in the British islands in the West Indies. By its republication, with some unimportant omissions, and by the substitution of a few words to adapt the paragraphs to existing slaveholders, it is proposed to convince American Methodists, and other citizens, who are guilty of the enormous sin of 'buying, selling, and enslaving men, women, and children.

THOUGHTS ON SLAVERY,

BY JOHN WESLEY.

'I. Slavery imports an obligation of perpetual service; an obligation which only the consent of the master can dissolve. It generally gives the master an arbitrary power of any correction not affecting life or limb. Sometimes they are exposed to his will, or protected only by a fine or some slight punishment, too inconsiderable to restrain a master of harsh temper. It creates an incapacity of acquiring any thing, except for the master's benefit. It allows the master to alienate the slave in the same manner as his cows and horses. Lastly, it descends in its full extent, from parent to child, even to the last generation.

'2. *The slave-trade* began in the year 1508, when *the Portuguese* imported the first negroes into Hispaniola. In 1540, Charles V., then king of Spain, gave positive orders, "THAT ALL THE SLAVES IN THE SPANISH DOMINIONS SHOULD BE SET FREE." This was accordingly done by Lagascar, whom he sent and empowered to free them all. But soon after Lagascar returned to Spain, slavery flourished as before. After-

ward other nations, as they acquired possessions in America, followed the example of the Spaniards; and slavery has taken deep root in most of the American colonies.

'II. In what manner are they generally procured and treated in America?

'1. Part of them by fraud. Captains of ships invited negroes on board, and then carried them away. More have been procured by force. The Christians, *so called*, landing upon their coasts, seized as many as they found and transported them to America.

'2. It was some time before the Europeans found a more compendious way of procuring African slaves, by prevailing upon them to make war upon each other, and to sell their prisoners. Till then, they seldom had any wars. But the white men taught them drunkenness and avarice, then hired them to sell one another. Others are stolen. Abundance of little ones of both sexes are stolen away by their neighbors. That their own parents sell them, is utterly false.—WHITES, NOT BLACKS, ARE WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION.

'3. Extract from the journal of a surgeon who went from New-York in the slave-trade. "The commander of the vessel sent to acquaint the king that he wanted a cargo of slaves. Some time after, the king sent him word he had not yet met with the desired success. A battle was fought which lasted three days. Four thousand five hundred men were slain upon the spot!" Such is the manner wherein the slaves are procured! THUS THE CHRISTIANS PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE HEATHEN!

'4. England supplies her American colonies with slaves, amounting to about a hundred thousand every year. So many are taken aboard the ships; but ten thousand die on the voyage; about a fourth part more die in the seasoning. So that thirty thousand die, that is, are murdered. O earth! O sea! cover not their blood!

'5. The negroes are exposed naked to the examination of their purchasers: then they are separated to see each other no more. They are reduced to a state, scarce any way preferable to beasts of burden. A few yams or potatoes are their food; and two rags their covering. Their sleep is very short, their labor continual and above their strength, so that death sets many of them at liberty before they have lived out half their days. They are attended by overseers, who, if they think them dilatory, or any thing not so well done as it should be, whip them unmercifully; so that you may see their bodies long after waled and scarred from the shoulder to the waist. Did the Creator intend that the noblest creatures in the visible world should live such a life as this?

'6. As to the punishment inflicted on them, 'they frequently geld them, or chop off half a foot! after they are whipped till they are raw all over, some put pepper and salt upon them; some drop melted wax upon their skin, others cut off their ears, and constrain them to broil and eat them. For rebellion, that is, asserting their native liberty, which they have as much right to as the air they breathe, they fasten them down to the ground with crooked sticks on every limb, and then applying fire to the feet and hands, they burn them gradually to the head!

'7. But will not the laws made in the colonies prevent or redress all cruelty and oppression? Take a few of those laws for a specimen, and judge.

'In order to rivet the chain of slavery, *the law of Virginia* ordains—'No slave shall be set free, upon any pretence whatever, except for some meritorious services, to be adjudged and allowed by the *Governor and Council*; and where any slave shall be set free by his owner, otherwise than is herein directed, the church-wardens of the parish wherein such negro shall reside for the space of one month, are hereby authorized and required to *take up and sell the said negro, by public outcry.*'

'Will not these lawgivers take effectual care to prevent cruelty and oppression?

'The law of Jamaica ordains—'Every slave that shall run away, and continue absent from his master twelve months, shall be *deemed rebellious*:' and by another law, *fifty pounds* are allowed to those who 'kill or bring in alive, a *rebellious slave*.' So their law treats these poor men with as little ceremony and consideration, as if they were merely brute beasts! But the innocent blood which is shed in consequence of such a detestable law, must call for vengeance on the murderous abettors and actors of such deliberate wickedness.

'But the law of *Barbadoes* exceeds even this—'If any negro under punishment by his master, or his order, for running away, or any other crime or misdemeanor, shall suffer *in life or member, no person whatsoever shall be liable to any fine therefor.* But if any man of wantonness, or only of bloodmindedness or cruel intention, *wilfully kill* a negro of his own'—now observe the severe punishment!—'he shall pay into the public treasury, fifteen pounds sterling: and not be liable to any other punishment or forfeiture for the same!

'Nearly allied to this, is that law of *Virginia*—'After proclamation is issued against slaves that run away, it is lawful for any person whatsoever to kill and destroy such slaves by such ways and means as he shall think fit.'

'We have seen already some of the ways and means which have been *thought fit* on such occasions: and many more might be mentioned. One man, when I was abroad,

thought fit *to roast his slave alive!* But if the most natural act of running away from intolerable tyranny deserves such relentless severity, what punishment have those *lawmakers* to expect hereafter, on account of their own enormous offences?

'III. This is the plain, unaggravated matter of fact. Such is the manner wherein our slaves are procured: such the manner wherein they were removed from their native land, and wherein they are treated in our colonies. Can these things be defended on the principles of even heathen honesty? Can they be reconciled, setting the Bible out of the question, with any degree of either justice or mercy?

'2. The grand plea is, 'They are authorized by law.' But can law, human law change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means. Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy. So that I ask; Who can reconcile this treatment of the slaves, first and last, with either mercy or justice? where is the justice of inflicting the severest evils on those who have done us no wrong? Of depriving those who never injured us in word or deed, of every comfort of life? Of tearing them from their native country, and depriving them of liberty itself; to which an Angolan has the same natural right as an American, and on which he sets as high a value? Where is the justice of taking away the lives of innocent, inoffensive men? Murdering thousands of them in their own land by the hands of their own countrymen; and tens of thousands in that cruel slavery, to which they are so unjustly reduced?

'3. But *I strike at the root of this complicated villany. I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice.* Judge Blackstone has placed this in the clearest light, as follows:

"The three origins of the right of slavery assigned by Justinian are all built upon false foundations. I. Slavery is said to arise from captivity in war. The conqueror having a right to the life of his captive, if he spares that, has a right to deal with him as he pleases. But this is untrue, that by the laws of nations a man has a right to kill his enemy. He has only a right to kill him in cases of absolute necessity, for self-defence. And it is plain this absolute necessity did not subsist, since he did not kill him, but made him prisoner. War itself is justifiable only on principles of self-preservation. Therefore it gives us no right over prisoners, but to hinder their hurting us by confining them. Much less can it give a right to torture, or kill, or even enslave an enemy, when the war is over. Since therefore the right of making our prisoners slaves, depends on a supposed right of slaughter, that foundation failing, the consequence which is drawn from it must fall likewise. 2. It is said, slavery may begin by one man's selling himself to another. It is true, a man may sell himself to work for another; but he cannot sell himself to be a slave, as above defined. Every sale implies an equivalent given to the seller, in lieu of what he transfers to the buyer. But what equivalent can be given for life or liberty? His property likewise, with the very price which he seems to receive, devolves to his master the moment he becomes his slave: in this case, therefore, the buyer gives nothing. Of what validity then can a sale be, which destroys the very principle upon which all sales are founded? 3. We are told that men may be *born slaves*, by being the children of slaves. But this, being built upon the two former false claims, must fall with them. If neither captivity nor contract, by the plain law of nature and reason, can reduce the parent to a state of slavery, much less can they reduce the offspring.' It clearly follows, that all slavery is as irreconcilable to justice, as to mercy.

'4. That slaveholding is utterly inconsistent with mercy, is almost too plain to need a proof. It is said: 'These negroes, being prisoners of war, our captains and factors buy them, merely to save them from being put to death. Is not this mercy?' I answer; 1. Did Hawkins, and many others, seize upon men, women, and children, who were at peace in their own fields and houses, merely to save them from death? 2. Was it to save them from death, that they knocked out the brains of those they could not bring away? 3. Who occasioned and fomented those wars, wherein these poor creatures were taken prisoners? Who excited them by money, by drink, by every possible means to fall upon one another? Was it not themselves? They know in their own consciences it was, if they have any consciences left. 4. To bring the matter to a short issue: Can they say before God, that they ever took a single voyage, or brought a single African from this motive? They cannot. *To get money, not to save* lives, was whole and sole spring of their motives.

'5. But if this manner of procuring and treating slaves is not consistent with mercy or justice, yet there is a plea for it which every man of business will acknowledge to be quite sufficient. One meeting an eminent statesman in the lobby of the House of Commons said—'You have been long talking about justice and equity; pray, which is this bill? Equity or justice?' He answered very short and plain—'Damn justice; it is necessity.' Here also the slaveholder fixes his foot; here he rests the strength of his cause. 'If it is not quite right, yet it *must* be so: there is an absolute *necessity for*

it. It is necessary we should procure slaves; and when we have procured them, it is necessary to use them with severity, considering their stupidity, stubbornness, and wickedness.' You stumble at the threshhold; I deny that villany is ever necessary. It is impossible that it should ever be necessary for any reasonable creature to violate all the laws of justice, mercy, and truth. No circumstances can make it necessary for a man to burst in sunder all the ties of humanity. *It can never be necessary for a rational being to sink himself below a brute. A man can be under no necessity of degrading himself into a wolf.* 'The absurdity of the supposition is so glaring, that one would wonder any one could help seeing it.

'6. What is necessary? and to what end? It may be answered; 'The whole method now used by the original purchasers of Africans is necessary to the furnishing our colonies yearly with a hundred thousand slaves.' I grant *this* is necessary to *that end.* But how is that end necessary? How will you prove it necessary that one hundred, that *one* of those slaves should be procured? 'It is necessary to my gaining a hundred thousand pounds.' Perhaps so: but how is *this* necessary? It is very possible you might be both a better and a happier man, if you had not a quarter of it. I deny that your gaining one thousand is necessary, either to your present or eternal happiness. 'But you must allow these slaves are necessary for the cultivation of our islands: inasmuch as white men are not able to labor in hot climates.' I answer; 1. It were better that all those islands should remain uncultivated for ever; yea, it were more desirable that they were altogether sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price, as the violation of justice, mercy, and truth. 2. But the supposition on which you ground your argument is false. White men are able to labor in hot climates, provided they are temperate both in meat and drink, and that they inure themselves to it by degrees. *I speak no more than I know by experience.* The summer heat in Georgia is frequently equal to that in Barbadoes, and to that under the line: yet I and my family, eight in number, employed all our spare time there, in felling of trees and clearing of ground, as hard labor as any slave need be employed in. The German family likewise, forty in number, were employed in all manner of labor. This was so far from impairing our health, that we all continued perfectly well, while the idle ones round about us were swept away as with a pestilence. It is not true, therefore, that white men are not able to labor, even in hot climates, full as well as black. If they were not, it would be better that none should labor there, that the work should be left undone, than that myriads of innocent men should be murdered, and myriads more be dragged into the basest slavery. 'But the furnishing us with slaves is necessary for the trade, wealth, and glory of the nation.' Better no trade, than trade procured by villany. It is far better to have no wealth, than to gain wealth at the expense of virtue. Better is honest poverty, than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat, and blood of our fellow creatures.

'7. When we have slaves, it is necessary to use them with severity. What, *to whip them for every petty offence till they are in a gore of blood? To take that opportunity of rubbing pepper and salt into their raw flesh? To drop burning sealing-wax upon their skins? To castrate them? To cut off half their foot with an axe? To hang them on gibbets, that they may die by inches with heat, and hunger, and thirst? To pin them down to the ground, and then burn them by degrees from the feet to the head? To roast them alive?* When did a Turk or a heathen find it necessary to use a fellow-creature thus? To what end is this usage necessary? 'To prevent their running away, and to keep them constantly to their labor, that they may not idle away their time. So miserably stupid is this race of men, so stubborn and so wicked! Allowing this, to whom is that stupidity owing? It lies altogether at the door of their inhuman masters, who gave them no means, no opportunity of improving their understanding; and indeed leave them no motive, either from hope or fear to attempt any such thing. They were no way remarkable for stupidity while they remained in Africa. To some of the inhabitants of Europe they are greatly superior. Survey the natives of Benin, and of Lapland. Compare the Samoeids and the Angelans. The African is in no respect inferior to the European. Their stupidity in our colonies is not natural; otherwise than it is the natural effect of their condition. Consequently it is not *their* fault, but yours: and you must answer for it before God and man. 'But their stupidity is not the only reason of our treating them with severity: for it is hard to say which is the greatest, this, or their stubbornness and wickedness. But do not these, as well as the other, lie at *your* door? Are not stubbornness, cunning, pilfering, and divers other vices the natural necessary fruits of slavery, in every age and nation? What means have you used to remove this stubbornness? Have you tried what mildness and gentleness would do? What pains have you taken, what method have you used to reclaim them from their wickedness? Have you carefully taught them, 'that there is a God, a wise, powerful, merciful Being, the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth; that he has appointed a day wherein he will judge

the world, will take an account of all our thoughts, words, and actions; that in that day he will reward every child of man according to his works: that then the righteous shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and the wicked shall be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?' If you have not done this, if you have taken no pains nor thought about this matter, can you wonder at their wickedness? What wonder if they should cut your throat? and if they did, whom could you thank for it but yourself? You first *acted the villian in making them slaves*, whether you stole them or bought them. You kept them stupid and wicked, by cutting them off from all opportunities of improving either in knowledge or virtue; and now you assign their want of wisdom or goodness as the reason for using them worse than brute beasts!

'V. I add a few words to those who are more immediately concerned.

'1. To *Traders*. You have torn away children from their parents, and parents from their children; husbands from their wives; wives from their beloved husbands; brethren and sisters from each other. You have dragged them who have never done you any wrong, in chains, and forced them into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life; such slavery as is not found among the Turks in Algiers, nor among the heathens in America. You induce the villain to steal, rob, murder men, women, and children, without number, by paying him for his execrable labor. It is all your act and deed. Is your conscience quite reconciled to this? does it never reproach you at all? Has gold entirely blinded your eyes, and stupified your heart? Can you see, can you *feel* no harm therein? Is it doing as you would be done to? Make the case your own. 'Master,' said a slave at Liverpool, to the merchant that owned him, 'what if some of my countrymen were to come here, and take away Mistress, and Tommy, and Billy, and carry them into our country, and make them slaves, how would you like it?' His answer was worthy of a man—'I will never buy a slave more while I live.' Let his resolution be yours. Have no more any part in this detestable business. Instantly leave it to those unfeeling wretches, 'who laugh at human nature and compassion.' Be you a man; not a wolf, a devourer of the human species! Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy.

'Is there a God? You know there is. Is he a just God? Then there must be a state of retribution; a state wherein the just God will reward every man according to his works. Then what reward will be rendered to *you*? O think betimes! before you drop into eternity! Think now. 'He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.' Are you a *man*? Then you should have a *human* heart. But have you indeed? what is your heart made of? Is there no such principle as compassion there? Do you never *feel* another's pain? Have you no sympathy? no sense of human wo? no pity for the miserable? When you saw the streaming eyes, the heaving breasts, the bleeding sides, and the tortured limbs of your fellow-creatures, were you a stone or a brute? Did you look upon them with the eyes of a tiger? Had you no relenting? Did not one tear drop from your eye, one sigh escape from your breast? Do you feel no relenting *now*? If you do not, you must go on till the measure of your iniquities is full. Then will the great God deal with *you*, as you have dealt with *them*, and require all their blood at your hands. At that day it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for you. But if your heart does relent; resolve, God being your helper, to escape for your life. Regard not money! All that a man hath, will he give for his life. Whatever you lose, lose not your soul; nothing can countervail that loss. Immediately quit the horrid trade; at all events be an honest man.

'2. To *Slaveholders*. This equally concerns all slaveholders, of whatever rank and degree: seeing *men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers!* Indeed you say, 'I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not concerned to know how they are come by.' Nay, but you are: you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly come by: otherwise you are partaker with a thief, and are not a jot honester than he. But you know they are not honestly come by: you know they are procured by means *nothing near so innocent as picking pockets, house-breaking, or robbery upon the highway*. You know they are procured by a deliberate species of more complicated villany, of fraud, robbery, and murder, than was ever practised by Mohammedans or Pagans; in particular, by murders of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now it is *your* money that pays the African butcher. *You* therefore are principally guilty of all these frauds, robberies, and murders. *You* are the spring that puts all the rest in motion. They would not stir a step without *you*: therefore the blood of all these wretches who die before their time lies upon *your* head. 'The blood of thy brother crieth against thee from the earth.' O whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it be too late; instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood-guiltiness! *Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, and thy lands at present are stained with blood.* Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt: spill no more the blood of the innocent. Do not hire another

to shed blood; do not pay him for doing it. Whether you are a Christian or not, show yourself a man! Be not more savage than a lion or a bear!

'Perhaps you will say; 'I do not buy any slaves; I only use those left by my father.' But is that enough to satisfy your conscience? Had your father, have *you*, has any man living a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting revelation aside. Neither war nor contract can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible, that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air: and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature. If therefore you have any regard to justice, to say nothing of mercy, or of the revealed law of God, render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men, and see that you invariably do unto every one, as you would he should do unto you.

'O thou God of love, thou who art loving to every man, and whose mercy is over all thy works; thou who art the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and who art rich in mercy unto all; thou who hast formed of one blood, all the nations upon the earth; have compassion upon these outcasts of men, who are trodden down as dung upon the earth! Arise, and help these that have no helper, whose blood is spilled upon the ground like water! Are not these also the work of thine own hands, the purchase of thy Son's blood? Stir them up to cry unto thee in the land of their captivity; and let their complaint come up before thee; let it enter into thine ears! Make even those that lead them captive to pity them and turn their captivity. O burst thou all their chains in sunder; more especially the chains of their sins: thou Saviour of all, make them free, that they may be free indeed!'

> 'The servile progeny of Ham,
> Seize as the purchase of thy blood
> Let all the heathens know thy name
> From idols to the living God
> The dark Americans convert,
> And shine in every Pagan heart!'

The preceding official documents which have been issued by the most imposing and powerful ecclesiastical Assemblies in our republic are strenuously recommended to all American citizens, and especially to those who profess to be Christians, of every denomination. Upon the members of the various churches, the awful responsibility rests, whether the curse of man-stealing shall longer be protracted, and whether the tremendous punishment of this heinous and 'complicated villany' shall longer inpend over our guilty country. A grosser delusion cannot be indulged, than the anticipation that the evil will be redressed and the crime be abolished by the Southern Legislators. To Christians the work peculiarly appertains. It is their *duty*, to brand slavery with *the mark of Cain;* and it is their *privilege*, to cleanse the temple of those '*chief Priests and Scribes, who have made the house of prayer a den of thieves.*' This can be accomplished only by recurring to the gospel in its authority and holiness; by admitting, in all their legitimate sway, the principles inculcated by the testimonies which have been cited; and by a prompt and unfeigned compliance with the just and evangelical requisitions which the Presbyterian and Methodist churches promulge.

Presbyterians and Methodists! This subject is urgently addressed to you. Here are your own doctrines and your own discipline. You solemnly and constantly proclaim before the world as the creed of your respective churches, that every slaveholder is 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.' You have publicly declared your conviction of the evil of slavery during nearly fifty years. You have pretended to record rules for its exptirpation from among you; and yet man-stealing is daily extending in your communions, and the number of 'sinners of the first rank, who are guilty of the highest kind of theft,' augments in the most crying and fearful manner. How long will you tolerate this appalling criminality? How long will you exhibit this marvellous and destructive hypocrisy? How long will you 'speak smooth things, prophesy deceits, say peace, peace, when there is no peace?' for 'there is no peace' saith the Lord, 'unto the wicked;' and if men-stealers, the most atrocious of all criminals before God and man, who never sincerely desired 'to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins,' are not the wicked; to what beings in the universe can the epithet be applied?

Preachers! Remember, as John Wesley remarked; '*the hands, the bed, the furniture, the house, and the lands of every slaveholder at present are stained with blood.*' You are commanded not to be partakers of other men's sins; instead of which, when you see the men-thieves, you consent with them; and are involved in all their guilt, as accessories both before and after the fact; for you not only encourage the robbery, but you also receive the donations of those felons into your church treasuries; and thereby you '*devour the prey, and divide the spoil.*'

We congratulate those Baptist and Pres-

byterian churches, who have adopted the system which excludes all slaveholders from their communion; and rejoice in your advancement in pure truth and Christian practice. But we would also affectionately urge upon you an additional measure which will render your principles and your discipline uniform. Eject all slave-driving preachers from your pulpits. The refusal of the slaveholder to the Lord's table, and the reception of the slave-holder into the pulpit, are utterly incongruous; and the latter most antichristian measure, not only nullifies the former, but absolutely obscures it from sight, and leaves the public to suppose that the crime of man-stealing is innocence in a preacher, while it is guilt in a common member. We therefore implore you to be always and decidedly consistent, and renounce altogether 'the unfruitful works of darkness.'

The appeal is likewise made to all those 'Christian people,' to adopt the language of the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1818, who have 'most inconsistently fallen into the practice of enslaving their brethren of mankind;' and your attentive perusal of the previous extracts from the standards of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches is earnestly desired. Do you sincerely believe that the religion which you profess in the smallest degree justifies American slavery? Did you you ever seriously and impartially examine the word of God, and compare its oracular dictates with the spirit, practice, and effects of slave-holding? Did you at any time apply the benevolent injunctions of the Mosaic law, and the merciful demands of the Lord Jesus Christ to the system of retaining your fellow-citizens in a state of bondage unparalleled for cruelty, baseness, and anguish in the annals of savage man? Have you ever attempted to review, as far as your imagination could soar, the stupendous events of that morning of retribution, when all actions and the motives whence they flowed, will be decided, not by the horrible codes of human legislation, but by the standard of unerring rectitude, and will be approved or condemned, as God the righteous Judge shall announce? Are you fully convinced that the dreadful debasement, the corroding toil, the constant privations, the agonizing fears, the lawless exactions, the brutal violations, and the hopeless ignorance to which you doom your fellow-citizens will be acknowledged by the Judge of the quick and the dead, as a consistent following of him 'who went about doing good?' 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,' do you truly anticipate that the King will admit a slave-driver's treatment of his colored fellow-citizens and disciples of Jesus, to be that giving of meat to the hungry, and of drink to the thirsty; that hospitality to a stranger, that clothing of the naked, that visiting of the sick, and that consolation to the prisoner; which he will announce as proof of supreme attachment to the gracious Redeemer? Your consciences cannot reply to these questions in the affirmative.

How much longer then will you endanger your eternal salvation? How dare you to assert the groundless plea of necessity; and hypocritically to make it a cover for the love and practice of man-stealing, and a cozening pretence for your 'shameful and unrighteous conduct?' Therefore, 'thus saith the Lord my God—feed the flock of the slaughter; whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty, and they who sell them say, blessed be the Lord, for I am rich, and their own shepherds pity them not. My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred me.' Zechariah xi. 4, 5, 8. 'Loose the bands of wickedness; undo the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke.' Isaiah lviii. 4—7. 'Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.' Jeremiah xxii. 12, 17. 'Weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.' v. 1—6.